

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 12, 2015 **Meeting No.:** 216

Project: Arundel Elementary School **Phase:** Discussion #1
Pre-Kindergarten – Second Grade
21st Century Schools Initiative

Location: W Rogers Avenue and Narcissus Avenue, one block southwest of the intersection of Park Heights Avenue and W Northern Parkway

PRESENTATION:

Anthony Cataldo introduced the project team. Design Collective project architect Michael Glaros and landscape architect Brian Reetz provided background on the neighborhood:

1. The team provided the following concept statement:
“Baltimore City Schools has made an investment to support academic success by the creation of 21st century schools that are flexible and adaptive, inspire social interaction and support diverse learning and teaching styles. The school building will be on the cutting edge of technology and environmental sustainability and will be a hub of the community it serves.
2. **Background and Context**
 - a. Pimlico racetrack is located within several blocks just east of the Park Heights neighborhood.
 - b. Adjacent school districts with Pimlico and Cross Country Elementary Schools are also in the 21st Century Schools program with design underway.
 - c. Other improvements for ballfield and recreational facilities are underway in close proximity to the Arlington Elementary School site.
 - d. The existing main buildings include a three story 1925 Gothic Revival brick and limestone school building, a 1936 addition and temporary trailers. The buildings are not currently landmarked.
 - e. There are temporary classrooms on the site.
 - f. The site is surrounded by single family homes to the north and east, and row houses to the south and west. The rear yards of the single family homes to the east abut the school site; several of these homes are in poor condition and are slated for demolition.
 - g. W Rogers Avenue is a two way street. Narcissus Avenue is one way heading north.
 - h. Primary pedestrian circulation is from W Rogers Avenue to multiple entrances on the front north face of the existing school. There is also some access from the west at Narcissus Avenue and Rockfield Avenue.
 - i. The school is served by 4 buses that primarily serve students with disabilities.
3. **Program**

- a. The site will become a strong extension as a teaching tool, promoting environmental awareness, social space, and play/athletic facilities.
 - b. The existing historic buildings will remain and be renovated.
 - c. Safety and security will be improved by consolidation of entrances.
 - d. There will be a new stair and elevator tower.
 - e. An Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) will be provided in a separate single story building. It will be connected to the elementary school.
4. **Design Solution**
- a. Site
 - i. Program distribution of major components, including but not limited to auto drop off on West Rogers Avenue, informal walk systems, storm water management, parking and loading areas, primary and secondary entries to both the main elementary school and the ECDC, outdoor classrooms, informal gathering areas and seating, gardens, playgrounds and a playing field.
 - ii. The design team shared perspective sketches illustrating an informal Olmsted landscape, and precedent images illustrating possibilities for the program areas.
 - iii. Planting areas would include indigenous plant materials.
 - b. Building
 - i. The architects provided a plan overview with distribution of interior program elements. Program areas noted are in the existing school buildings unless otherwise noted.
 - 1. Basement Floor
 - a. West Entry for the Public
 - b. Community Room
 - c. Food Services and Dining
 - d. Fine Arts
 - e. Gymnasium
 - f. New Vertical Circulation and Additional Multistory Public Space (Addition)
 - g. Loading and Service
 - h. Dining Terrace
 - 2. First Floor
 - a. Secured Main Entry
 - b. Administration
 - c. Student Services
 - d. Existing Auditorium
 - e. Classrooms
 - f. Media
 - g. New Vertical Circulation and Additional Multistory Public Space (Addition)
 - h. Early Childhood Development Center – Classrooms, Administration, and West-facing Entry (Addition)
 - 3. Second Floor
 - a. Classrooms
 - b. Collaborative Space
 - c. New Vertical Circulation (Addition)

4. Third Floor
 - a. Classrooms
 - b. Collaborative Space
 - c. New Vertical Circulation (Addition)
 - d. Science
 - e. Technology
 - f. Media
- ii. Diagrammatic sections illustrate significant grade transitions and special use areas
- iii. A diagrammatic massing axonometric illustrates the relationships of existing building and additions

PANEL COMMENTS:

The panel suggested that initial alternative studies to illustrate early exploration and decision points would be helpful. Specific comments included:

1. Design Solution
 - a. Site
 - i. Drawings and precedents are nicely presented and provocative.
 - ii. Consider axial relationships with existing streets, e.g. Rockfield and Magnolia Avenues, when establishing entry portals from West Rogers and major building entry at the ECDC
 - iii. Consider enhancing exterior entries for community and for the ECDC with outdoor gathering space or terraces
 - iv. Carefully consider school system commitment/capabilities for long term maintenance related to outdoor planting areas
 - v. Re-evaluate pedestrian movement and sidewalk configuration at both West Rogers and Narcissus Avenues.
 - vi. Use new tree plantings to strongly frame views to major architectural features, including the main entry to the existing building
 - vii. Investigate capturing additional site area at West Rogers and Denmore Avenues to evaluate an alternative location for the ECDC
 - b. Building
 - i. Reevaluate and consider establishing consistent circulation diagrams for all floors
 - ii. Study moving/shifting building and vertical circulation additions to the existing school; consider a view through the building to the landscaped rear courts
 - iii. Evaluate ECDC connection to the existing building
 - iv. Consider ECDC alternatives as noted in comments a.ii. and a.vii., or as an independent structure not connected to the existing school building.
 - v. Express architectural concept and intent for both addition and ECDC and what relationship will exist between the existing structure and the new.

PANEL ACTION:

Discussion Only. The panel looks forward to further development of the design for the project.

Attending:

Kristin Ward, Meredith Sullivan, Michael Glaros, Fred Marimo, Brian Reetz – Design Collective
Amy McCarthy – Samaha
Charlie Ravenna, Michael McBride, Diane Miceli - CSP

UDARP Panel Members – Messrs. Bowden, Haresign*, Rubin, and Burns

Planning Department- Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Reni Lawal,
Mary Clapsaddle